



THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH

## Edinburgh Research Explorer

**Nastroika iazyka: Upravlenie kommunikatiiami na postsovetskom prostranstve. Edited by E. G. Lapina-Kratasyuk, O. V. Moroz, E. G. Nim. Moscow: Novoe literaturnoe obozrenie, 2016, 445 pp.**

### Citation for published version:

Ryazanova-Clarke, L 2018, 'Nastroika iazyka: Upravlenie kommunikatiiami na postsovetskom prostranstve. Edited by E. G. Lapina-Kratasyuk, O. V. Moroz, E. G. Nim. Moscow: Novoe literaturnoe obozrenie, 2016, 445 pp.', *Slavic Review: Interdisciplinary Quarterly of Russian, Eurasian, and East European Studies*, vol. 77, no. 1, pp. 282-284. <https://doi.org/10.1017/slr.2018.66>

### Digital Object Identifier (DOI):

[10.1017/slr.2018.66](https://doi.org/10.1017/slr.2018.66)

### Link:

[Link to publication record in Edinburgh Research Explorer](#)

### Document Version:

Early version, also known as pre-print

### Published In:

Slavic Review: Interdisciplinary Quarterly of Russian, Eurasian, and East European Studies

### General rights

Copyright for the publications made accessible via the Edinburgh Research Explorer is retained by the author(s) and / or other copyright owners and it is a condition of accessing these publications that users recognise and abide by the legal requirements associated with these rights.

### Take down policy

The University of Edinburgh has made every reasonable effort to ensure that Edinburgh Research Explorer content complies with UK legislation. If you believe that the public display of this file breaches copyright please contact [openaccess@ed.ac.uk](mailto:openaccess@ed.ac.uk) providing details, and we will remove access to the work immediately and investigate your claim.



*Nastroika iazyka: Upravlenie kommunikatiiami na postsovetskom prostranstve*. Edited by E. G. Lapina-Kratasyuk, O. V. Moroz, E. G. Nim. Moscow: Novoe literaturnoe obozrenie, 2016, 445 pp.

The rapidly changing socio-cultural context in Russia has not yet been sufficiently covered by the emerging scholarship, which makes *Nastroika iazyka* an important contribution to the field. Even more importantly is that the book has made a new step in the development of contemporary sociolinguistics in the Russian language by mainly Russia-based scholars.

According to the editorial introduction, the book was envisaged as a collective monograph about language policy in Russia, what is presented, however only partially reaches this objective. Few chapters explicitly address language policy and the volume would do with an overarching conceptual vision and a coherent across-chapters methodology to pass for a collective monograph. But judged for what it is – the volume deserves both attention and praise.

The book is divided in four parts. Part One entitled ‘Languages of Post-Soviet Reflection: Experience of Calibration’ opens with a chapter by Evgevi Savitskii. It deals with the historical metalanguage used in the description of the Soviet and colonial past in the post-Soviet period. This is followed by Tatiana Vaizer who develops the trauma theory in relation to poetic translation. Oksana Moroz’s contribution elaborates on various attempts to compile an artistic thesaurus of Soviet expression and how Soviet language is approached in literature with ironic reflection. Nikolai Poseliagin returns to the theme of the trauma to discuss strategies of the replacements of the traumatic experiences in Russian public discourse. He claims that the memory of trauma is responsible for a creation of a chain of substitutions whereby the first level substitutes establish their own associations with trauma. This is all well and could be accepted if the chapter relating to the theoretically rich field of lexical semantics in discourse offered some theoretical bearings and term definitions. By contrast, the chapter by Karpova and Dmitriev discussing successful and unsuccessful attempts at Reforms of Russian Spelling since the Reform of 1917 to nowadays, is clear, informative and well researched. In addition to providing an excellent overview of the reforms, the chapter analyses the agents of language policy that, at every stage of the reform process, affected the outcomes of the endeavour.

Part Two ‘Registers of Language Policy: Authorities and the Networks’ begins with Egor Panchenko’s chapter. Based on discursive analytical approaches and agenda setting analysis Panchenko explores the construction of the news agenda in the state controlled mass media by analysing discursive macrostructures. He – rather predictably -- concludes that the key themes of the media are hinged on the counter position of Russia and the US and privileging the names of Putin and Medvedev as the most frequent. The chapter is followed by Arkhipova et al providing an analysis of citations and cultural references used in the 2011-2012 street protest posters arguing that the dialogue with the authorities and establishment of contact with fellow protesters were the main objectives of the citations. The rest of part two consist of a cluster of three chapters, by Vera Zvereva, Ingunn Lunde and Michael Gorham, related to various aspects of the language of Russian internet. All three scholars are well versed in this field, which is evidenced in the contributions. Zvereva looks into the representation of social distinction online, Lunde discusses the cases of ‘performative metalinguistics’ analysed from the online viewers’ responses to the three humorous videos discussing the Russian language from You Tube. Lunde argues that the viewers perform their linguistic attitudes to the content of the videos by stylising, quoting and creatively transforming the video content. Finally, Gorham poses a question ‘how and why the everyday views about language begin to play an important role in what may be seen as political parameters’ (p. 244). To answer this question, he looks into the development of the notion ‘the internet as a rubbish pit’, which is ultimately used by the state media technologies as a strategy of restraining the oppositional discourse.

Part Three is dedicated to the official languages of Russia's minor federal units and ethnicities and contains contributions which are equally well researched, methodologically solid and produce valuable results. Orekhov and Reshetnikov map 31 of such languages on the internet, working out the rules for success in terms of raising awareness and visibility for minor languages. Ekaterina Khodzhaeva explores language policy in Tatarstan and the responses to this policy from Russian and Tatar speakers. She concludes that the situation in Republic is far from the desirable Russian-Tatar bilingualism. The final chapter in Part 3, Tamara Zhuravel' investigates the process of language loss in the Usinsk Hollow in the Krasnoiarsk area. The schools, Zhuravel argues, are the central agents of language policy for minor languages, however neither the schools nor the minor language speakers demonstrate enthusiasm for the language maintenance.

Part Four deals with the post-Soviet states and, somewhat less fitting, with Finland. Davydov and Logunova analyse the chronology and content of the representation of post-Soviet states on the three main channels of Russian state controlled television in 2011-12. The chapter shows that no community of the CIS is highlighted and the very name of CIS is hardly used on TV. The depictions primarily relate to the Russian context and official visits are privileged. Overall, the authors argue that television reporting of the so called 'near abroad' betrays no objective of showing the various sides of life in these states. Kseniia Gusarova follows with the exploration of the Ukrainian Wikipedia. Finally, the Finnish scholar Ekaterina Protassova discusses language policy in Finland which aims at achieving not only Finnish and Scandinavian but also the European identity. This goes side by side with the growing linguistic impact of the Eastern neighbour, resulting in the growth of Russian language taken in Finnish schools and in an increasing visibility of Russian in the country's linguistic landscape.

The book is interesting and at times, exciting, but is uneven in the quality of scholarship and the relative relevance of the contributions to the volume. Some chapters seem to be put together by a thorough consideration, others by a loose connection and an imprecise metaphor of 'language tuning'. A valuable guidance to the chapter's interpretations is however provided by Gasan Guseinov in a useful and intelligent Introduction to the volume. Despite some hitches, the book will be an important reading for all those who are intently watching the tribulations of Russian language use, discursive trends and language policies in Putin's era.

LARA RYAZANOVA-CLARKE

University of Edinburgh